

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05
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P R 221959Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6497
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CU, CS
SUBJECT: CUBAN-COSTA RICAN CONSULAR RELATIONS ANNOUNCED

1. SUMMARY. UNDERLINING COMMERCIAL RATIONALE FOR MOVE,
AND CITING "GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF DISTENTION" AND U.S.
MOVES TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA,
FOREIGN MINISTER GONZALO FACIO ANNOUNCED RE-ESTABLISH-
MENT OF CONSULAR RELATIONS WITH CUBA AS OF FEB 21, 1977.
GOCCR IS SAID TO BE IN NO HURRY TO ESTABLISH CONSULATE
IN CUBA BUT CLEARLY DOES NOT WISH TO BE BEHIND U.S. IN
STEP-BY-STEP OMLATERAL RELATIONS NORMALIZATION PROCESS. END SUMMARY.
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2. COSTA RICAN FOREIGN MINISTER ANNOUNCED RE-ESTABLISHMENT
OF CONSULAR RELATIONS WITH CUBA FEB 21. ACCORDING
TO MEDIA ACCOUNTS, SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENT ALSO
MADE IN HAVANA.

3. IN WRITTEN AND ORAL DECLARATIONS, FONMIN GONZALO

FACIO STATED THAT THIS MOVE "IS IN CONFORMITY, IN GENERAL TERMS, WITH THE ATMOSPHERE OF DISTENTION THAT HAS PROCEEDED IN THE CARIBBEAN WHICH HAS EVEN EXTENDED TO THE UNITED STATES. NEWSPAPERS PUBLISH FREQUENT REPORTS CONCERNING THE DECISION OF PRESIDENT CARTER TO GIVE PRIORITY STUDY TO THE STEPS NECESSARY FOR NORMALIZING RELATIONS OF HIS COUNTRY WITH CUBA."

4. FACIO GAVE COMMERCIAL TIES AS RATIONALE FOR CONSULAR RELATIONS; PRESENCE OF DIRECTOR OF EXPORT PROMOTION CENTER ENRIQUE GONZALEZ COLOMBARI AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT UNDERLINED IMPORTANCE OF THIS RELATIONSHIP. IN THIS REGARD, FACIO NOTED:

--"CONSULAR RELATIONS GREATLY ASSIST IN FACILITATING OUR EXPORTS TO CUBA. COMMERCE INCREASES IF WE HAVE A CONSULAR AGENT TO MAINTAIN CONTINUOUS CONTACT TO PROMOTE OUR EXPORTS."

-- IN 1976 COSTA RICA EXPORTED \$2,732,000 WORTH OF BEANS, METAL FURNITURE, ELASTIC AND RAILROAD TIES TO CUBA-- "NOT A PALTRY AMOUNT."

--"PRESENCE OF A CUBAN CONSULAR OFFICIAL IN COSTA RICA TO GIVE VISAS TO COSTA RICAN BUSINESSMEN WHO NEED TO TRAVEL TO CUBA TO LOOK AFTER THEIR EXPORT BUSINESS, AND TO HANDLE THE CARGO BILLING OF THIS INCREASING COMMERCE IS INDISPENSABLE."

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5. RESIDENT CUBAN COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIVE CARLOS ANTELO PEREZ, ALSO ON HAND FOR ANNOUNCEMENT, SPOKE IN GENERAL TERMS OF COINCIDENCE BETWEEN CR AND CUBA OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AND BENEFIT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES. (THERE IS NO INDICATION IN COSTA RICAN MEDIA THAT HE SPOKE OF ANY CUBAN EXPORTS TO COSTA RICA. FOR THAT MATTER, NEITHER DID FACIO.)

6. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS QUERY, GONZALEZ STATED THAT IT IS "PROBABLE" THAT A COSTA RICAN COMMERCIAL OFFICE WOULD BE OPENED IN CUBA -- BUT THAT EVERYTHING WOULD GO IN STAGES AND IT WOULD NOT BE UNTIL CONSULATES HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AND OFFICIALS NAMED THERETO THAT THIS NEXT STEP WOULD BE STUDIED.

7. RE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, FACIO STATED: "THESE HAVE NOT BEEN DISCUSSED. THIS (ANNOUNCEMENT), OF COURSE, IS A STEP FORWARD ON THAT ROAD."

8. ACCORDING TO INFORMED SOURCES IN GOCR, COSTA RICA

IS IN NO HURRY TO ESTABLISH A CONSULATE AND TO NAME
CONSULAR OFFICIAL IN CUBA. SAME SOURCES ALSO
SAY THAT FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS (ELECTIONS TAKE
PLACE IN ONE YEAR), NO MOVE TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC
RELATIONS WILL BE MADE BY ODUBER GOVERNMENT.

9. COMMENT: CONSULAR RELATIONS ANNOUNCEMENT IS NO
SURPRISE. COSTA RICANS HAVE HAD THIS MOVE IN MIND FOR
OVER A YEAR BUT DELAYED TAKING DEFINITIVE STEP BECAUSE
OF CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. HOWEVER, FEAR OF
IMPLICATIONS OF CUBAN ADVENTURES IN AFRICA NOW
HAS SUBSIDED AND HAS BEEN SUPERCEDED BY COSTA RICA'S
DESIRE NOT TO FALL BEHIND THE UNITED STATES IN A MEASURED
STEP-BY-STEP NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA.
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